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Types of Errors

Survey research is useful to understand human behavior, but it can include different types of errors and biases that affect the accuracy of results (Shivani, 2025). For example, if a survey is not designed with a careful process the results might not show participants real experiences. One reference point of error is sampling bias, which can happen when participants do not show the target population (Grad Coach, 2023). For example, if a survey only includes people from one recovery facility, this might not show the experiences of people in different programs. Another type of bias is response bias, which happens when participants give inaccurate answers because they feel uncomfortable or want to appear a specific way (Hillmer, 2024). For example, a person might not admit to relapse behaviors because they feel embarrassed or fear judgment from others. Another reference point of error is nonresponse bias, which can happen when some people not to participate in the survey, which can lead to missing perspectives (Shivani, 2025). For example, individuals experiencing high stress or relapse might avoid taking surveys, which can skew the results of experiences (Meiklejohn et al, 20212). Additionally, another reference point of error is question wording bias, which can affect how participants understand the survey questions (Ponto, 2015). For example, if a question is leading or not clear, participants might respond in ways that does not reflect true experiences.

According to Meiklejohn, et al (2012), survey research relies on participants to report accurate behaviors, such as alcohol consumption. For example, in this study, participants were asked how frequently they drank alcohol and how much they consumed in a week. The research shows that low response rates can skew results, which makes results less accurate. For example,

if only a person who drinks moderately responds to the survey, researchers might overlook accurate results of alcohol consumption in the population. Overall, to reduce errors and biases in a similar survey, I would use clear and neutral question wording to avoid influencing responses, also offer anonymous online participation to encourage honest reporting, and recruit participants from different locations to represent the population (Meiklejohn et al, 2012). For example, include participants from different recovery programs or different community can help to gain a broader range of experiences and reduce sampling bias. These methods can improve the reliability and validity of survey results and minimize nonresponse and response biases.

References

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